



CITIG

CANADIAN INTEROPERABILITY TECHNOLOGY INTEREST GROUP
GROUPE D'INTÉRÊT CANADIEN EN TECHNOLOGIE DE L'INTEROPÉRABILITÉ

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 13, 2013

NG9-1-1 TAKES A MAJOR STEP FORWARD IN CANADA: NATIONAL GOVERNANCE AND COORDINATION WORKSHOP A SUCCESS

(Saint John, NB) - Today, during a presentation to the Paramedic Chiefs of Canada's Annual Conference, the Canadian Interoperability Technology Interest Group (CITIG) announced the results of the Next Generation (NG) 9-1-1 National Governance and Coordination Workshop and launched a new Web site dedicated to raising awareness about NG9-1-1 issues for responders and emergency management officials in Canada.

Next Generation (NG) 9-1-1 is fast approaching. It brings with it enormous new capabilities for public safety, including text, photo, video and, possibly someday, social media, to 9-1-1. However, it also brings with it huge risk, substantial budget pressures and an absolute need to "get it right" on National, Provincial and local levels. Many estimates coming from the U.S., where they are ahead of Canada on implementation, are indicating that NG9-1-1 can see an increase in resourcing (people, equipment, facility space) of up to 30 percent! This reality is a serious concern for the responder agencies that currently run 9-1-1 Centres (known as Public Safety Answering Points or PSAPs).

Fortunately, for many provinces, they have created legislation that provides both a steady stream of funding, based on pennies per mobile device per month, plus liability protection. Alberta just passed legislation that will see \$0.44 per device per month estimated to generate approximately \$17 million to support 9-1-1 and NG9-1-1 operations and development.

With this in mind, and recognizing that in order to better coordinate 9-1-1 efforts of Canada, the issue of governance needed to be clarified, CITIG reached out to both the Association of Public Communications Officers Canada (APCO) and the Canadian Division of the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) with a view to hosting a two day National Governance and Coordination Workshop. A major step forward occurred on June 10 and 11, 2013 when the CITIG, APCO and NENA partnered to host the NG9-1-1 National Governance and Coordination Workshop in Ottawa.

The workshop, which sold out in only four days, brought 70 of Canada's leading 9-1-1 experts from Newfoundland to British Columbia together in a facilitated workshop designed to answer the following question: What do we need to do to establish an appropriate governance and/or coordination structure to advance the NG9-1-1 agenda in Canada in an efficient, effective and objective manner?

After two days of hard work and multiple break-out sessions, the workshop developed a number of key recommendations, draft action plans and detailed work plans. Some of these relate to operations, technology and awareness. However the key recommendation, developed after extensive discussion and briefings from a number of entities, including Public Safety Canada's Interoperability Development Office, was that NG9-1-1 be added as a new Action Plan under the Communications Interoperability Strategy for Canada (CISC).

The CISC was first proposed at the inaugural Canadian Public Safety Interoperability Workshop hosted by CITIG in Ottawa in 2008. Approved by the Ministers Responsible for Emergency Management from every Province, Territory and the Federal Government in 2011, and supported by the Canadian Associations of Chiefs of Police, Fire and Paramedics, the CISC is the national (not federal) roadmap for multiple interoperability efforts. Some of these efforts include 700 MHz Broadband for Public Safety Data, Social Media for Emergency Management and the National Alerting System.

Some of the main advantages of this recommendation include:

- immediately inserts NG9-1-1 into a pre-existing, approved and successful national strategy;
- provides a national coordination body to assist in the development of NG9-1-1 across Canada;
- opens the door to potential resources already existing to support other interoperability related efforts; and,
- ensures that NG9-1-1 is immediately and continually included in strategic briefing at the Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministerial levels.

While all the participants need to now take these recommendations back to their governing bodies before an actual approach to the CISC Governing body (likely at their next face to face meeting immediately after the Seventh Canadian Public Safety Interoperability Workshop in Vancouver this November), all agreed we need to get moving on increasing awareness about NG9-1-1.

With that in mind, CITIG announced the creation of its new “Action NG9-1-1” initiative. Similar to what CITIG created in 2010 when they announced “Action 700” (www.action700.ca), Action NG9-1-1 will encompass a wide range of communications and marketing efforts including a new Web site with strategic resources such as a one pager, briefing notes, sample presentation and FAQs. CITIG will also leverage Social Media, regional presentations and related communications efforts. For more on Action NG9-1-1 please go to www.NG9-1-1.ca, follow @CITIG_Canada and #Action_NG911 on Twitter or join the CITIG discussion Group on LinkedIn.

While this first National NG9-1-1 Governance and Coordination Workshop was a resounding success, all agreed that this was just the first step of a very long road ahead. The good news is that we now have a draft roadmap for where we need to go and how we need to get there!

CITIG works to improve Canadian public safety interoperability at home and abroad through collaborative efforts, innovation and leadership. CITIG is a not-for-profit Canadian corporation managed in partnership by the Paramedic Chiefs of Canada (PCC), the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs (CAFC) and the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP). Today, CITIG is made up of more than 1500 volunteers from the responder community, all orders of government, non-governmental organizations, associations, academia and industry dedicated to improving the safety and security of first responders, and the people and critical infrastructure of Canada.

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